

**California Service Corps
Program Committee Meeting
September 13, 2005**

**California Chamber of Commerce
1215 K Street, Suite 1400
Capitol Room
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 444-6670**

AGENDA

Tuesday, September 13, 2005

1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

1:00 – 1:05	Welcome and Introductions	Ann Marie Occhipinti Bob Riley
1:05 – 1:30	Priorities and Initiatives Context Setting <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Federal Priorities• Definition of State Priorities and Initiatives• Previous State Priorities and Initiatives• Process for Developing Staff Recommendation	David Muraki Kaira Esgate
1:30 – 2:00	Review of Staff Recommendation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Initiatives• State Funding Priorities• Capacity Building Pilot	Staff
2:00 – 3:00	Public Comment on Staff Recommendation	
3:00 – 3:45	Priority and Initiative Discussion	Commissioners
	ACTION ITEM: Adopt State Priorities and Initiatives	
3:45 – 4:00	Next Steps	Kaira Esgate
4:00	Adjourn	Ann Marie Occhipinti Bob Riley

Priority – California Legacies

Prepared by – David Muraki

Overview of Issue

A demographic revolution caused by the simultaneous aging of the huge “*Baby Boomer*” cohort and the “*longevity revolution*” will lead to a 2.4 fold increase in the number of older Californians by the year 2030. Older Californians, including the oldest cohort of baby boomers (who will turn 60 in 2006), are a civic resource of historic dimensions. Older Californians consistently identify volunteering as an interest second only to travel in their plans for retirement. Yet despite increased time available upon retirement (29 hours/week for men and 18 hours/week for women on average) volunteering drops off upon retirement and data indicates that the number of hours per week volunteered by older Americans has dropped substantially in recent years. Constraints include:

- limited systems for recruiting and matching older Californians with organizations that need volunteers;
- limited capacity of community organizations to train, supervise, and otherwise support volunteers;
- traditional volunteer roles that will not appeal to many older volunteers (many local organizations view older adults through a lens of traditional thinking about volunteering (as service providers), and not as leaders, project coordinators, advocates, or in other roles of directing efforts or shaping strategies)
- a focus by policy makers on aging-related demands such as Social Security and Medicare to the exclusion of the aging-related assets.

The next quarter century can be a time when social and personal legacies of great impact can be built. The potential dimensions of this legacy are a match for many of the seemingly intractable issues of our time. The actual dimensions of this legacy will be dependent to a large extent on encouragement and support given to older volunteers. History has shown us that the civic resource represented by older volunteers will not become engaged spontaneously without strategic and visible action.

Federal Policy Efforts

Engaging more older volunteers is a priority of CNCS and will likely be a major recommendation of the decennial White House Conference on Aging. Federal funding for Senior Corps is slowly ticking upwards but at a rate far below population growth and far below the level of interest expressed by potential volunteers. Federal funding for other senior service programs is scarce. The National Council on Aging through their RespectAbility initiative is active at the national level as well as Civic Ventures, a San Francisco-based national non-profit.

State Policy Efforts

Most activity is in the non-profit sector. In the public sector, the California Department of Aging and California Area Agencies on Aging are responsible for carrying out the provisions of the Older Californians Act. Levels of state support for senior service have declined due to recent budget cuts. State funding for Senior Companions has been cut by

about 75%. State funding for Foster Grandparents has been eliminated. (State funds have never supported the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program.) The Intergenerational Education Program administered for many years by the California Department of Education is now unfunded. The California Senior Service Corps Directors Association, California Office of the Corporation for National and Community Service/National Senior Service Corps, and AARP are but three organizations actively involved in the issue area.

CSC Involvement

In previous grantmaking processes, the California Service Corps has given preference to applications with well-developed plans for engaging older volunteers.

Potential Applicants

Given the diversity and universal availability of older volunteers, almost any organization applying for AmeriCorps funds is a potential applicant.

Potential Service Activities

AmeriCorps members placed in community organizations would recruit, screen, match, train, supervise and coordinate teams of older volunteers and may serve through other activities that increase the capacity of community organizations to better engage older volunteers.

Criteria for Priority Points

- Variety and substance of volunteer opportunities, including a significant number of volunteers who serve intensively, more than four hours per week.
- Understanding of issues related to engaging older volunteers including language, transportation, recruitment strategies and targets.
- Organizational partners that contribute experience and other resources to recruiting and supporting older volunteers.
- Additional criteria that will be evaluated primarily in the Community Outputs and Outcomes section of the application:
 - Clear, meaningful roles for AmeriCorps members in recruiting and supporting volunteers.
 - Extent to which AmeriCorps are trained to carry out their roles.
 - A well-developed plan and systems to recruit, screen, match, supervise and recognize community volunteers.
 - Extent to which the activities of community volunteers contribute to the direct service objectives of the program.

2006-07 AMERICORPS GRANTMAKING Priorities and Initiatives: Purpose and Development

Background

In every grant cycle, the California Service Corps Commission sets state funding priorities that are used in selecting applications to receive AmeriCorps funding.

Priorities are statements of the commission interest in:

- specific needs to be met, for example, emergency preparedness or illiteracy, and/or
- specific target groups to receive service, for example, students in grades K-6 participating in afterschool programs, and/or
- specific groups to engage in service opportunities, for example older volunteers or lower division college and university students with an interest in the teaching profession, and/or
- specific organizations to receive AmeriCorps resources, for example small community organizations or high priority schools.

In the past, applications have received between one and five points depending upon the degree to which their application meets the commission's priorities. In the past, applications meeting multiple priorities could receive up to ten points. Though priority points can raise an application's score into the fundable range, all applications are scored primarily on overall program quality which accounts for up to 100 points.

In addition to state priorities, applicants will also be informed of federal priorities. Federal priorities were discussed at the August 30, 2005 Program Committee meeting.

When the opportunity arises, the commission also identifies initiatives. Initiatives are partnerships involving the commission and other funders. In past funding cycles, the commission has combined our resources with those of the California Department of Education, Chancellor's Office of the California Community Colleges, Office of Child Abuse Prevention, county and state children and families commissions, California Department of Health Services, and others to fund initiatives aimed at illiteracy, teacher shortage, child abuse and neglect, school readiness, health care access, and other needs.

On September 13, 2005, the Program Committee will meet to approve funding priorities and initiatives for the 2006-07 AmeriCorps grant cycle.

Priority and Initiative Development Process

- In May 2005, staff began the process of identifying potential priorities and developing staff recommendations for the Program Committee.
- During the initial phase, staff brainstormed and developed a wide-ranging list of potential priorities. Over the course of the summer, staff researched and analyzed potential priorities in order to assess their feasibility as state funding priorities. As part of its research, staff contacted a range of organizations.

- In the final stage of developing staff recommendations, staff members evaluated potential priorities using several criteria, including: existence of a compelling community need, federal and state priorities, whether the priority would be conducive to an innovative use of AmeriCorps resources, and very importantly, the presence of an established network positioned to make use of the priority, apply for, and implement, an AmeriCorps grant.
- The commission has carried over a number of funding priorities from one grant cycle to another based on the belief that, in order to have an impact on a particular need or issue area, grantees will require time to test models, refine strategies and reflect on lessons learned. Thus, the commission has sustained its commitment to many issues that it has identified as funding priorities.
- In addition to its work developing priorities, staff also engaged other funders in discussions about potential service initiatives. However, no new initiatives were developed for consideration of the Program Committee.

Grantmaking Policy #B11 – Capacity Building Pilot
Prepared by – William Ing

Overview of Issue

Traditionally, the AmeriCorps program has focused its efforts on direct service through which activities place members in direct contact with recipients of service (e.g., mentoring, tutoring, health education, home visiting, etc.). In recent years, the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) has broadened AmeriCorps' scope to include a mix of direct service and capacity building activities such as fundraising, volunteer management, etc. This focus on capacity building can be linked to CNCS' growing emphasis on community volunteerism and AmeriCorps program sustainability. In 2002, CNCS declared that recruiting, supporting and managing volunteers is a fundamental purpose of AmeriCorps. CNCS required that all programs include a volunteer component and permitted members to play a role in all aspects of volunteer generation and support. Since then, CNCS has gradually expanded this capacity building role to include other activities. The recently published AmeriCorps rule codified these changes and articulated that allowable capacity building activities include volunteer management, fundraising, automating an organization's systems, etc. The rule also laid out steps and requirements that would increase AmeriCorps program sustainability (defined by CNCS as a decreasing reliance on federal funds over time).

Although CSC is generally supportive of any effort to strengthen the service and volunteer field, it believes that focusing on the volunteer management aspect of capacity building would align with CSC's ongoing capacity building efforts, be consistent with CSC's core mission and would be effective in building community organizations' capacity to provide additional and/or more efficient services.

Properly trained and supervised, volunteers can perform meaningful activities such as advocating for abused children in the court system, mentoring at-risk youth, performing environmental restoration work in state and national parks, serving as board members for nonprofit organizations and assisting professional first responders and emergency personnel in disaster situations. Contrary to popular belief, effective utilization of volunteers does require financial and other resources. Organizations must ensure that volunteers are properly recruited, screened, matched with opportunities, trained, supervised and recognized. Improperly managed volunteers can be a liability to an organization, or even a threat to those being served by the sponsoring organization (poorly screened, untrained or unsupervised volunteers working with young children, for example).

In 2004, the Urban Institute conducted a volunteer management capacity study that examined community organizations' use of volunteers. The report provides the first formal assessment of community organizations' willingness to use, and readiness for, volunteers. Among the study's key findings is the assertion that most community organizations are able to use 20 new volunteers without any additional capacity enhancements (e.g., funding, volunteer managers, etc.). The report also found that less than half of organizations employ suggested best practices for managing volunteers.

The Urban Institute report, other related studies (e.g., studies on Baby Boomers and their potential volunteer contributions) and anecdotal evidence from the field strongly suggest that many community organizations need and desire both volunteers and additional resources to effectively support them.

Federal Policy Efforts

CNCS currently requires all programs to have a volunteer component and permits members to play a role in all aspects of volunteer generation and support.

In July 2005, CNCS released a draft strategic plan outlining its major goals through 2010. This plan outlines four cross-program priorities, including the greater engagement of volunteers in communities throughout the country. CNCS plans to build “the supply line for America’s armies of compassion” by using its resources to generate and support volunteers while building the capacity of community organizations (faith-based and secular) to effectively manage volunteers. CNCS’ stated goals encompass both national and internal Corporation targets for 2010, such as half of all nonprofit organizations and faith- and community-based organizations regularly utilizing effective volunteer recruitment and management practices (measured by the use of at least two of three effective volunteer management practices), and four million community volunteers annually recruited and managed within Corporation-funded programs.

CSC Involvement

CSC has a longstanding history of supporting California’s service and volunteerism sector with CNCS and outside resources. It has identified volunteer recruitment and support¹ as a funding priority in its 2002 AmeriCorps Planning Grants Request for Proposals (RFP), 2003 AmeriCorps RFP and 2004 AmeriCorps RFP. In its 2003 and 2004 AmeriCorps RFPs, CSC also created a capacity building pilot intended to support programs focusing entirely on building the capacity of local organizations to effectively engage non-AmeriCorps volunteers in service.

Capacity Building Pilot Design

CSC has an interest in (1) building the capacity of the state’s community organizations (faith-based and secular) to manage and support volunteers, and (2) aligning its grantmaking activities with CNCS priorities in order to maximize the amount of national competitive funding flowing into the state. A special capacity building pilot would give CSC the opportunity to support AmeriCorps programs that can address both goals.

¹ CNCS has previously used the term “volunteer generation” to refer to volunteer recruitment, screening, matching, training, supervision, recognition, etc. To ensure consistency in grantmaking, CSC adopted this term as well. CNCS has recently adopted the phrase “volunteer recruitment and support.” For purposes of consistency, this summary will use volunteer recruitment and support to refer to the full range of volunteer management activities.

Under CSC's capacity building pilot, applicants could propose programs focused exclusively on strengthening the ability of community organizations to effectively use volunteers to advance their work in local communities. All capacity building pilot programs would consist of two required elements: a volunteer recruitment component and a volunteer support component. Applicants would be able to partner with, and support, a variety of community organizations. For example, a program's AmeriCorps members could recruit volunteers and place them in a variety of youth-serving nonprofit organizations. It could also place members as volunteer managers at individual schools to supervise volunteer tutors throughout a school district.

The pilot's volunteer generation component would focus on recruiting community volunteers for organizations that had high-quality opportunities and sound systems for screening, matching, training, supervising and recognizing volunteers. It would be permissible for the program's volunteer recruiters to refer potential volunteers to organizations at which other members are serving as volunteer managers.

Through the pilot's volunteer support component, applicants would assign their members to service activities that build the long-term capacity of community organizations (faith-based and secular) to provide enhanced or additional service through volunteers. This includes efforts to expand the pool of organizations that adopt volunteerism as a strategy to meet community needs. For example, members could conduct education and outreach activities to community organizations, and follow up by assisting them with designing high-quality opportunities and establishing their volunteer programs. Member service activities would revolve around institutionalizing best practices and principles of effective volunteer management. Members might serve as a community organization's volunteer manager, create manuals, create or modify systems (volunteer recruitment plans, volunteer manual, screening procedures, training plans, etc.), etc.

CSC could use the capacity building pilot as a flexible tool to address multiple federal and state funding priorities. For example, the pilot selection process could give priority points to those applicants that proposed to focus on building capacity for service-learning programs, mentoring programs, programs that recruited Baby Boomers as volunteers and/or programs that will assist small community organizations.

Potential Applicants

Organizations that would be particularly suitable applicants for an AmeriCorps Capacity Building Pilot are those that regularly act as clearinghouses to recruit, match and/or manage volunteers on behalf of local community organizations. For example a Volunteer Center might field requests from nonprofit organizations seeking volunteer assistance (nonprofit organizations with neighborhood cleanup projects, schools with tutoring programs, etc.), recruit volunteers from the community at large and match these volunteers to appropriate projects. Specific organizations that might apply through the pilot include local Volunteer Centers, Volunteer Centers of California, Hands On Network (formerly the City Cares Network) affiliates, local United Way chapters,

mentoring programs or associations, Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) sponsors and school district or county office of education service-learning offices.

Priority – Childhood Obesity
Prepared by – John Govea

Overview of Issue

The percentage of overweight school-age children (ages 6-11) has more than doubled between 1970 and 2000 (6.5% to 15.3%). The percentage of overweight adolescents (ages 12-19) has tripled during the same period (5.0% to 15.5%). In an August 2005 study, the California Center for Public Health Advocacy linked the increasing prevalence of overweight to a variety of factors including increased overall calorie intake, increased consumption of soft drinks and high-fat, high-calorie, ready-to-eat foods, low levels of physical activity (aggravated by safety concerns in low-income communities) and limited access in low-income neighborhoods to healthy foods.

There are several significant long-term health risks that have been linked to childhood obesity. These include Type 2 Diabetes, high blood pressure, sleep apnea, mental health issues and adult obesity. Costs for health care attributable to excess body weight account for up to 7% of annual U.S. health care expenditures among adults (\$90 billion per year). In California the cost of medical care, workers' compensation and lost productivity attributable to overweight, obesity and physical inactivity among adults will be an estimated \$28 billion in 2005.

As with adult-onset obesity, childhood obesity has multiple causes centering on an imbalance between energy in (calories obtained from food) and energy out (calories expended by metabolic rate and physical activity.) Therefore, treatment of childhood obesity centers on physical activity, diet management and behavior modification.

An April 2005 brief by the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research reports that nearly one million California adolescents either get no physical activity or get less than recommended levels. In 2003, only 70.6% of adolescents reported participating in recommended levels of regular physical activity. The percentages are lower for girls (66.5%), Latinos (68.1%) Asians (62.3%) and African American teens (62.7%).

Federal Policy Efforts

The US Department of Health and Human Services has announced the Surgeon General's call to action to prevent and decrease overweight and obesity in children and adolescents.

State Policy Efforts

The California Department of Health Services has developed the California Obesity Prevention Initiative (COPI). The goals of COPI include intervening with children who are at high risk, addressing the disparities in obesity prevalence and treatment for underserved and vulnerable populations and creating environments that support healthy eating and physical activity for all.

Governor Schwarzenegger has announced the Governor's Summit on Health, Nutrition and Obesity to Shape Up California that will take place on September 15, 2005, bringing together experts and leaders from business, transportation, education, government and public health.

CSC Involvement

CSC has a number of after-school and school-based programs that touch on the factors that contribute to obesity through activities such as physical activity and play, gardening, nutrition and general health education. The program most focused on this issue is FitKids. This program places members in underserved and underperforming elementary schools to lead recess, lunchtime, class time and after-school programming that engages students in physical activity through play. Members also incorporate nutritional instruction in their programming.

Potential Applicants

Sports4Kids, one of our present grantees, is considering a major expansion of its Fit Kids program that reintroduces and supports sports and physical education into public schools. It expects to expand within California to Sacramento, San Jose and Long Beach.

Organizations addressing this issue include YMCA; Sports, Play & Active Recreation for Kids! (SPARK) and the California Endowment. YMCA is active in providing physical education in the schools. SPARK is a non-profit organization that provides training and workshops to engage youth of different developmental stages (early childhood, elementary, middle and high school) in physical education. It works primarily with schools and youth serving organizations that would be our potential applicants. SPARK assists these schools and organizations with obtaining funds to conduct these activities. The California Endowment has also selected 6 communities to participate in a \$26 million campaign that teams community-based organizations, school districts and public health departments to change local fitness and eating habits. Those communities are each presently in a planning process which could result in utilizing AmeriCorps members as a strategy for providing services.

Potential Service Activities

Health educators could provide instruction on nutrition and diet in schools, and with community based partners. Fitness facilitators might work with neighborhoods on development of safe spaces to engage in physical activity and help in the formation of exercise groups among children and their families. Through a FitKids type model, members would facilitate games and physical activity during recess and lunch breaks in elementary and middle schools and teach teachers to conduct and incorporate physical education in their lesson plan.

Criteria for Priority Points

In assessing programs that address multiple factors contributing to childhood obesity in underserved communities CSC will evaluate the degree to which the program:

- Serves low-income communities that have a well-documented prevalence of obesity among its children;
- Has an active partnership with schools and health agencies addressing the issue of obesity;
- Includes effective instruction on nutrition to children and to their parents;
- Increases the level of physical activity among obese children; and,
- Creates safe places for children and their families to engage in physical activity;

Priority – Emergency/Disaster Preparedness and Response
Prepared by – Eddie Aguero

Overview of the Issue

California's emergency preparedness and response needs are numerous, complex and far reaching. Federal and state agencies have taken an all-hazard approach to better preparing families and communities for emergencies, which could come in the form of a natural disaster, human caused emergency, or act of terrorism. The need to prepare for and utilize spontaneous volunteers during a disaster or emergency has become a focus for AmeriCorps and its partnering programs. As communities throughout California prepare by recruiting and training volunteers, AmeriCorps members are playing a key role within many disaster/emergency programs.

Federal Policy Efforts

- Department of Homeland Security (DHS) – The Department of Homeland Security, through its many emergency management agencies, coordinates with state and local officials and emergency management personnel to provide necessary assistance before, during and after major disasters and emergencies. Through its myriad of programs, volunteers are recruited, trained and utilize to provide support services to disaster/emergency responders from all public safety service organizations.

State Policy Efforts

- Governor's Office of Emergency Services – The Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES) coordinates overall state agency response to major disasters in support of local government. The office is responsible for assuring the state's readiness to respond to and recover from natural, manmade, and war-caused emergencies, and for assisting local governments in their emergency preparedness, response and recovery efforts. During major emergencies, OES calls upon state agencies to help provide support. Due to their capabilities and placement in local communities, California's major national service resources, AmeriCorps and Senior Corps (RSVP), are regularly called upon to assist in disaster/emergency preparedness and response activities.
- California Service Corps/Citizen Corps Program – CSC is the agency responsible for administering California's Citizen Corps Program (CCP). The CCP is actually composed of a growing number of programs, including Volunteers In Police Service, Neighborhood Watch Program, Community Emergency Response Team, Medical Reserve Corps, and Fire Corps – all coordinated by a Citizen Corps Council. Each of these programs offers unique volunteer opportunities to serve in local security efforts.

CSC Involvement

This area of member activity was a priority during the last application process. The focus was to fund preparedness and response training for AmeriCorps members. The training

took the form of the 20-hour Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training. CSC AmeriCorps programs have placed members with law enforcement and fire service agencies. For the 2004-05 AmeriCorps program year, the following AmeriCorps programs had performance measures involving preparedness and response activities: American Red Cross SAFE Corps, Fresno Safe and Proud Neighborhoods, Foundation for California Community Colleges (FCCC) ALERT and the Los Angeles Conservation Corps Recovery Team.

Potential Applicants

In addition to the traditional community outreach conducted by CSC, the following Citizen Corps programs are being encouraged to become AmeriCorps applicants:

- Volunteers In Police Service
- Neighborhood Watch Program
- Community Emergency Response Team
- Medical Reserve Corps
- Fire Corps

Potential Service Activities

- Members can recruit and coordinate volunteers to help in emergency response activities.
- Members can assist disaster relief and emergency management agencies in mass care (mass care and feeding), family services (disaster case work), community relations (information outreach), volunteer and donations management, and (supporting) local assistance centers.

Criteria for Priority Points

Programs that support the engagement of volunteers in preparing for and responding to all emergencies:

- Well-designed emergency preparedness and response activities are the primary focus of member service activities;
- Members receive CERT or other preparedness and response training; and,
- Partnership includes key government and non-government emergency response and disaster relief organizations.

Priority – Federal Work Study
Prepared by – Beth Stern

Overview of Issue

- In 2002-2003, CSU campuses devoted an average of 27 percent, more than \$5.2 million, of their Federal Work Study funding to community service placements, well above the national average of 14 percent and nearly quadruple the minimum requirement of 7 percent.
- CSU Sacramento devotes 67.3 percent of its Federal Work Study allocation to community service; much of that supports the tutoring program America Reads. Other CSU campuses with noteworthy community service allocations include CSU Fresno (55.8 percent), CSU Monterey Bay (52.4 percent), and CSU San Bernardino (41.3 percent).
- Federal law requires 7% of Federal Work Study funds received by a postsecondary institution be allocated to fund community service activities, thereby getting students out of the cafeteria and into the community.
- There are approximately 900 U.S. institutions of higher education that utilize service learning and civic engagement in curriculum.

Federal Policy Efforts

- *Campus Compact* - Campus Compact is a national coalition of more than 950 public and private college and university presidents – representing some 5 million students – who are committed to fulfilling the civic purposes of higher education.
- *Higher Education Reauthorization Act - Federal Work Study* – Federal law requires that institutions of higher education allocate 7% of their Federal Work Study funds to community placements of students.
- *Corporation for National and Community Service* – The CNCS Draft Strategic Plan for 2005-2010 outlines various strategies to attract more college students to take part in service opportunities and to develop a lifelong habit of volunteering. These strategies include the development and utilization of service learning courses, more extra-curricular opportunities to serve in the community, and encouraging institutions of higher education to provide more service opportunities through the Federal Work Study program. In fact, the Draft Strategic Plan sets a goal that by the year 2010, 20% (as opposed to the current 7%) of Federal Work Study funds will be devoted to college students who engage in service.

State Policy Efforts

- *California Campus Compact* – California Campus Compact is a membership organization of college and university presidents leading California institutions of higher education in building a statewide collaboration to promote service as a critical component of higher education.
- *1999 Governor's Initiative: A Call to Service for Universities, Colleges, and Community Colleges* – In April 1999, Governor Gray Davis called on California's

institutions of higher education to develop a community service requirement for graduation in order to strengthen an ethic of service among California's college students.

CSC Involvement

CSC has been involved with the effort to involve more college students in service through the utilization of Federal Work Study dollars since the launch of the America Reads Initiative in 1997. Currently, there are a handful of operating programs in the CSC portfolio that utilize FWS students in their program designs, such as: Jumpstart California, a program that involves college students working with low-income preschool children to build literacy and social skills; and, UCLA BruinCorps, a program in which UCLA undergraduate students tutor low performing children and youth in reading, writing, math and science at 20 program partner sites in the Los Angeles community. Although only a small amount of current programs in CSC's portfolio have received priority points for the utilization of FWS dollars, there is an interest in the field as evidenced by a panel discussion held at the 2005 Summer Training in San Francisco for current AmeriCorps programs. The panel consisted of representatives from CSU, community colleges, California Campus Compact and Jumpstart California, who discussed tips and lessons for programs curious about how to develop relationships with institutions of higher education, and interested in how to incorporate Federal Work Study students into their program designs.

Potential Applicants

- Colleges and universities.
- Programs with partnerships with institutions of higher education to utilize Federal College Work Study students in community-based service opportunities.

Potential Service Activities

AmeriCorps members utilizing Federal Work Study dollars can serve in a variety of program designs, including, but not limited to:

- Literacy-focused programs for school-aged children and adult community members who cannot read or are learning English as a second language;
- Capacity Building for community-based organizations, including economic and neighborhood revitalization programs;
- Mentoring youth, violence prevention and encouraging college attendance; and,
- Food Security: In an example of a program already running at Humboldt State, college students are educating local 3-5 graders about the biology and ecology of growing crops and the process of putting food on their table.

Criteria for Priority Points

- Higher education institutions involved in the proposed program increase their percentage of Federal Work Study funds devoted to community service placements.

- Partnerships include financial aid offices and/or other key college representatives.
- Formal agreements exist between financial aid offices and proposed program for Federal Work Study funding.
- Federal Work Study funds are detailed as match in the budget narrative of proposed program design.
- AmeriCorps member service activities are connected to the identified program need.
- Risk management, liability, and transportation issues have been considered.

Priority – Foster Youth
Prepared by – Denise Keller

Overview of Issue

Over half a million children are in the federal foster care system; in California approximately 90,000 young people live in out-of-home placements. Too often we hear horror stories of the system gone wrong, particularly for the youngest and most vulnerable children. Occasionally we hear of birth families who have turned their lives around or adoptions that give children permanent homes, but we rarely hear about the thousands of teenagers, up to 4,000 a year in California, who are wards of the state until they “age out” of the foster care system when they turn 18 or graduate from high school.

Most foster children heading toward emancipation have had little preparation for taking on the responsibilities of self-sufficiency. At best, they may have participated in the Independent Living Program at a local community college or a community-based organization, and they may have had a skills assessment or written a Transition Plan with a caseworker, but these are not enough to prepare young people to live successful, independent lives.

Statistics illustrate their difficulties: almost 60% of young adults accessing federally funded youth homeless shelters in 1997 were previously in foster care (Casey). In a San Francisco study, over 40% of former foster youth did not graduate from high school; 47% received some form of public assistance or had problems paying for food or housing; fewer than half were employed four years after leaving care; and 42% had become parents themselves (Barth, 1990).

Federal Policy Efforts

Significant federal dollars (Chaffee Act, 1999, etc.) are allocated to foster youth services, transitioning youth to independent living, and – to some degree – improving educational outcomes for foster youth. Some funding, although technically available, is not utilized at the state/county level due to high match percentages, difficulty of implementation, and other issues.

State Policy Efforts

Generally, state efforts are focused on transition services, independent living education, and some local office of education or school district programs. State programs include those operated by the Department of Social Services:

- California State Program Improvement Plan
- Governor’s Initiative on Homelessness CDSS/EDD/WIA Taskforce
- Independent Living Program
- Child Welfare Redesign Project
- STEP (Supportive Transitional Emancipation Program), etc.

CSC Involvement

Two related priorities established during the 2003-2004 grantmaking cycle included “services to foster youth” and “former foster youth as AmeriCorps members.” Several applications received priority points, and at least two of those programs were funded and currently focus their activities on foster youth. Some applicants indicated their capacity and plans for enrolling former foster youth as AmeriCorps members, although this effort has generally been more difficult than anticipated, even for those applicants who are uniquely able to support former foster youth in a successful term of service. To better meet the needs of greater numbers of transitioning foster youth, staff recommends a single priority focused on specific services to that group.

Potential Applicants

Community-based organizations working or able to work with transitioning foster youth; current youth-serving programs; offices of education; California and local conservation corps; etc.

Potential Service Activities

- Educational advocate and school liaison (class selection; extra-curricular activities; meeting high school graduation and college preparatory requirements; enrolling in specialized high school programs as appropriate (AVID, Upward Bound, ROP, etc.); identifying and meeting application deadlines for college, vocational training and service opportunities; pursuing financial aid; developing job skills; vocational mentoring).
- Tutoring (at school, after-school location, and/or home/group home) – direct and/or through volunteer matching.
- Training caseworkers/foster parents/group home staff to support academic achievement (maintaining school when youths’ placement changes, scheduling appointments outside school hours).
- Reform life-skills development approaches to be more hands-on. Provide youth who are leaving care with a variety of opportunities to learn independent living skills and provide tangible resources, such as cash, household items, and a driver’s license (Casey recommendation).

Criteria for Priority Points

- The partnership includes significant involvement of foster youth serving agencies;
- Comprehensive service activities focus on providing opportunities outside classroom learning for foster youth to employ skills needed for successful transition to independence;
- Service activities include increasing achievement of age-appropriate milestones (i.e., high school graduation, drivers’ education and licensing, applying for and

maintaining jobs, participating in internships, service activities, or vocational skills programs, etc.);

- Service activities assist foster youth in identifying and connecting with current and future services and opportunities; and,
- Program services are focused on transitioning foster youth ages 13-21.

Priority – High Priority Schools
Prepared by – Johannes Troost

Overview of Issue

- California ranked 45th of 50 states in 2003 in its efforts to improve student performance in English/language arts and mathematics.
- Of the variables related to low academic performance, those children living in poverty are most vulnerable to academic failure, poor health, crime, and other indicators of well being.
- Of California's approximately 9,222 schools, approximately 60% or 5,533 schools are eligible for federal Title 1 funding for students from low-income families.

Simply stated, a majority of California's children are not proficient in English/language arts and mathematics, and are increasingly ill-prepared for a highly competitive job market.

Federal Policy Efforts

The US Department of Education, through the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) monitors student performance by state through the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), a test administered in all states that assesses performance in English/language arts (ELA) and math. In 2003, California ranked 45th of 50 states.

Through the NCLB, Title 1 schools (schools that have large numbers of economically disadvantaged students) who do not succeed in meeting student improvement goals in English/language arts and math are placed in "Program Improvement," and receive additional resources and progressive sanctions if improvement goals are not met.

State Policy Efforts

The California Department of Education (CDE) has established an accountability plan that monitors student achievement and school performance through the Academic Performance Index (API). The API helps define adequate yearly progress toward meeting both state and federal academic improvement goals. The API is a number between 200 (the lowest possible score) and 1000 (the highest possible score) for the school that indicates its student body proficiency in ELA and math. Each year, all school API scores are divided into 10 deciles and assigned a rank of 1 to 10. CDE has a number of intervention programs based on API score and school rank. Two of these are: High Priority Schools (only those schools that receive a state rank of 1); and, School Improvement Title 1 schools, regardless of state rank or API, that fail to make progress toward their API improvement targets.

Schools ranked in the bottom 3 deciles are predominantly Title 1 schools, and include all state High Priority schools.

CSC Involvement

CSC has a history of supporting focused efforts to improve academic performance. In 1999, CSC developed a joint initiative with CDE for federal America Reads grants. In 2004, in an effort to focus resources on those schools with the greatest need, CSC established a priority for placing AmeriCorps members in poorly performing schools in high poverty neighborhoods. Member service activities focused on tutoring, mentoring or enrichment activities that had a direct impact on academic achievement.

Potential Applicants

Applicant organizations for this priority will include: Title 1 schools (public and charter schools) and community based organizations serving Title 1 schools.

Potential Service Activities

AmeriCorps members and volunteers typically serve as reading and math tutors, mentors, homework assistants, enrichment/activity specialists, and volunteer managers/coordinators.

Criteria for Priority Points

An applicant can receive points in this priority if:

- The preponderance of service sites in the applicant's proposal are schools in the bottom three API deciles;
- The preponderance of AmeriCorps member and volunteer placements are in schools in the bottom three deciles; and,
- The preponderance of member and volunteer service activities focus on academic improvement.

Initiative – School Readiness

Prepared by – Johannes Troost

Overview of Issue

- Early childhood experiences are the key to learning, success in school, and functioning in later life. Neuroscience has shown that brain growth is at its highest between the ages of 0-3, and that there are critically important periods for some sensory, motor, and language capabilities, as well as mental health and social functioning, all of which impact a child's ability to learn and succeed in school and with their career and life goals.
- The School Readiness Initiative focuses efforts on poor children, families, and neighborhoods where the need for information and resources is greatest.
- Over the past several decades, there have been enormous shifts in the social and economic conditions of families, with many more parents working out of the home for longer periods of time. California families need a variety of stable, high quality early care and education options available for their children to provide a foundation for school success.

Federal Policy Efforts

Federal policy has resulted in Head Start and more recent Early Start programs. These two federal programs are consistently under-funded.

This Initiative adopted the definition of school readiness developed by the National Education Goals Panel (NEGP) which covers three aspects of a child's life: children's readiness for school and schools' readiness for children, family and community supports, and services that contribute to children's readiness for school success.

State Policy Efforts

County First Five Commissions are among the leaders in the school readiness effort. These commissions receive funding from Proposition 10 passed by voters in 1998. Proposition 10 taxes tobacco products and generates about \$700 million a year in revenue that must be spent on health issues for children ages 0 to 5. County commissions receive eighty percent of this money, and the state commission receives twenty percent. It is these funds that support the School Readiness Initiative.

The School Readiness Initiative engages families, community members, health and social service professionals and educators in the important work of preparing children, birth to age five, for elementary school. The counties and state have adopted the NEGP definition as the framework for the five "Essential and Coordinated Elements" required of every SR program:

1. Early Care and Education (ECE): improved access to quality ECE through referrals, information and outreach to parents and providers, and improved implementation of effective practices through training of ECE providers.

2. Parenting and Family Support Services: to improve literacy and parenting skills, home visitation, employment development, and family court services.
3. Health and Social Services: such as health plan enrollment, provision and/or referral to basic health care including prenatal care, mental health counseling, services for children with disabilities and other special needs, nutrition, oral health, drug and alcohol counseling, child abuse prevention, and case management.
4. Schools' Readiness for Children/School Capacity: schools' outreach to parents; kindergarten transition programs; and cross-training, shared curriculum, and planning for early childcare educators/providers and early elementary teachers. A seamless provision of health, social services, after-school programs, and other supports for children and families are also included.
5. Program Infrastructure, Administration, and Evaluation: participant, site, district, and county coordination and staff training and development. Program evaluation aimed at continuous program improvement, fiscal accountability, and collaborative governance (with families and community members) is also included.

The First Five Service Corps Program includes parts of these five "Essential and Coordinated Elements." Services are culturally and linguistically appropriate and sensitive to the needs of diverse populations, including children with disabilities and other special needs.

CSC Involvement

CSC initiated the funding partnership with county and state Children and Family Commissions in 2002. CSC also helped develop a VISTA program as part of this initiative. CSC provided \$1 million a year in funding for the last three years, which was matched by \$2 million a year in county Children and Family Commission funds. Local commissions fund community based organizations with a blend of Proposition 10 and CSC dollars for the school readiness initiative. This includes organizations like Boys and Girls Clubs, child care centers, community based family resource centers, and local health and dental clinics serving high poverty areas in urban, suburban and rural communities.

Service Activities

Member service activities include among other things: distributing "Parent Kits" to new mothers; home and hospital visiting; helping parents learn to read and play with their children; enrolling children in healthy families and other no or low cost health and dental insurance programs; connecting parents to alcohol and drug, employment and other social services.

Initiative Implementation

Staff recommend a second three year commitment to this initiative. County Children and Family Commissions have agreed to continue and potentially expand their matching funds to this initiative. Participating counties currently include: Del Norte, Humboldt,

Kern, Lake, Lassen, Madera, Mendocino, Orange, Riverside, San Diego, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, Ventura and Yolo.

Priority – Small Community Organizations (Faith-Based and Secular)
Prepared by – William Ing

Overview of Issue

Unlike other potential priorities and initiatives, the small community organization issue does not reflect an actual community need, but rather a trend in federal funding and policy. President Bush has articulated an interest in seeing more programs operated and managed by faith-based and community-based organizations (FBOs and CBOs). The White House has communicated this interest to federal agencies through executive orders and other guidance. Results include the creation of funding directed at FBOs and CBOs (e.g., the Department of Health and Human Services' Compassion Capital Fund) and emphasis on a level playing field in which there are fewer regulatory and bureaucratic barriers to FBOs and CBOs competing for funding. There is evidence that the White House measures success in this area by tracking federal grants awarded to FBOs. A recent White House fact sheet reports that from federal fiscal year (FY) 2003 to FY 2004, the number of grants awarded to FBOs by five major federal agencies increased by 20 percent, while the amount of grant funding awarded to FBOs increased by 14 percent.²

Aligning the California Service Corps' (CSC) 2006 AmeriCorps grantmaking with the federal government's emphasis on FBOs and CBOs presents CSC with an opportunity to bring additional funds into California while building capacity in the state's service and volunteerism field. Since the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) has demonstrated that it has a strong interest in supporting the President's Faith-Based and Community Initiative, addressing this issue strengthens California's applicants in competing for national funds.

Federal Policy Efforts

The White House and other federal agencies are working to increase the involvement of FBOs and CBOs in delivery of government-sponsored services. The White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives serves as a coordinating entity. It provides resources, hosts conferences and refers interested FBOs/CBOs to state and local faith-based and community liaisons, as well as federal Centers for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. Located in eleven federal departments and agencies (including CNCS), Centers provide FBOs and CBOs with resources and link them to host agency funding opportunities. State and local faith-based liaisons play a similar role, acting as a single point of contact in their jurisdictions, disseminating information about federal funding opportunities, supporting capacity-building efforts, etc.

Through Executive Order 13331 (issued February 2004), President Bush has explicitly charged CNCS with supporting his Faith-Based and Community Initiative. CNCS has responded with several efforts, including establishment of FBO/CBO support as a funding priority.

² The *Compassion in Action: Producing Real Results for Americans Most in Need* fact sheet (www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/03/20050301-1.html) refers specifically to FBOs, not FBOs and CBOs.

State Policy Efforts

The California Employment Development Department (EDD) has funded FBOs and CBOs through its California Community and Faith-Based Initiative. This initiative supported 40 programs (\$7.24 million) in state FY 2002 and 20 programs (\$4.97 million) in FY 2001. Although EDD is not currently funding this initiative, it now includes language in its RFPs indicating that FBOs and CBOs are eligible grant applicants. Under the previous administration, the state's FBO/CBO liaison was housed at the California Health and Human Services Agency. At present, the liaison position is vacant.

CSC Involvement

This priority is an outgrowth of CSC's ongoing efforts to make its resources accessible to a range of community organizations. CSC has focused on these organizations through outreach (directly and through intermediaries) and grantmaking. In 2000, CSC and the California Council of Churches developed an outreach database of 354 FBOs and service providers. In its 2002 AmeriCorps planning grant process, CSC created a funding priority for applicants that included FBOs and CBOs in their programs. CSC carried the FBO/CBO funding priority into its 2003 and 2004 AmeriCorps operating grant RFPs. Prior to any major grantmaking cycle, CSC typically publicizes technical assistance sessions and the RFP through its outreach database and intermediaries such as Professor John Orr (USC Center for Religion and Civic Culture), the San Francisco Foundation's FAITHS Initiative, EDD and the California Council of Churches.

Potential Applicants

The small community organization priority would focus on a subset of FBOs and CBOs: small community organizations (faith-based and secular) with relatively few resources. High-capacity applicants that partner with small FBOs and CBOs would bring resources to organizations that cannot directly access federal grants, and build the California service and volunteerism field's capacity to deliver more services through the effective recruitment and support of volunteers.

Potential Service Activities

Since this priority refers to a type of *organization* rather than an *issue area* (e.g., education or the environment), members would be involved in the full range of AmeriCorps service activities. For example, FBOs in CSC's current portfolio engage their members in referring the homeless to appropriate services; tutoring and mentoring; and volunteer management.

Criteria for Priority Points

Through its RFP, CSC will prioritize those applicants that involve small FBOs and CBOs in their proposed AmeriCorps program by evaluating the extent to which:

- Small community organizations benefit from AmeriCorps resources;

- The partnership consists of small community organizations with little or no history of accessing national service resources;
- Small community organizations are active and valued members of the partnership;
- Member service activities effect change in small community organizations that will be in place after members leave (members might establish a volunteer program and its associated systems, expand an organization's pool of potential board members, etc.); and,
- Partners demonstrate an understanding of church-state issues (if applicable).

Priority – California Legacies

Prepared by – David Muraki

Overview of Issue

A demographic revolution caused by the simultaneous aging of the huge “*Baby Boomer*” cohort and the “*longevity revolution*” will lead to a 2.4 fold increase in the number of older Californians by the year 2030. Older Californians, including the oldest cohort of baby boomers (who will turn 60 in 2006), are a civic resource of historic dimensions. Older Californians consistently identify volunteering as an interest second only to travel in their plans for retirement. Yet despite increased time available upon retirement (29 hours/week for men and 18 hours/week for women on average) volunteering drops off upon retirement and data indicates that the number of hours per week volunteered by older Americans has dropped substantially in recent years. Constraints include:

- limited systems for recruiting and matching older Californians with organizations that need volunteers;
- limited capacity of community organizations to train, supervise, and otherwise support volunteers;
- traditional volunteer roles that will not appeal to many older volunteers (many local organizations view older adults through a lens of traditional thinking about volunteering (as service providers), and not as leaders, project coordinators, advocates, or in other roles of directing efforts or shaping strategies)
- a focus by policy makers on aging-related demands such as Social Security and Medicare to the exclusion of the aging-related assets.

The next quarter century can be a time when social and personal legacies of great impact can be built. The potential dimensions of this legacy are a match for many of the seemingly intractable issues of our time. The actual dimensions of this legacy will be dependent to a large extent on encouragement and support given to older volunteers. History has shown us that the civic resource represented by older volunteers will not become engaged spontaneously without strategic and visible action.

Federal Policy Efforts

Engaging more older volunteers is a priority of CNCS and will likely be a major recommendation of the decennial White House Conference on Aging. Federal funding for Senior Corps is slowly ticking upwards but at a rate far below population growth and far below the level of interest expressed by potential volunteers. Federal funding for other senior service programs is scarce. The National Council on Aging through their RespectAbility initiative is active at the national level as well as Civic Ventures, a San Francisco-based national non-profit.

State Policy Efforts

Most activity is in the non-profit sector. In the public sector, the California Department of Aging and California Area Agencies on Aging are responsible for carrying out the provisions of the Older Californians Act. Levels of state support for senior service have declined due to recent budget cuts. State funding for Senior Companions has been cut by

about 75%. State funding for Foster Grandparents has been eliminated. (State funds have never supported the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program.) The Intergenerational Education Program administered for many years by the California Department of Education is now unfunded. The California Senior Service Corps Directors Association, California Office of the Corporation for National and Community Service/National Senior Service Corps, and AARP are but three organizations actively involved in the issue area.

CSC Involvement

In previous grantmaking processes, the California Service Corps has given preference to applications with well-developed plans for engaging older volunteers.

Potential Applicants

Given the diversity and universal availability of older volunteers, almost any organization applying for AmeriCorps funds is a potential applicant.

Potential Service Activities

AmeriCorps members placed in community organizations would recruit, screen, match, train, supervise and coordinate teams of older volunteers and may serve through other activities that increase the capacity of community organizations to better engage older volunteers.

Criteria for Priority Points

- Variety and substance of volunteer opportunities, including a significant number of volunteers who serve intensively, more than four hours per week.
- Understanding of issues related to engaging older volunteers including language, transportation, recruitment strategies and targets.
- Organizational partners that contribute experience and other resources to recruiting and supporting older volunteers.
- Additional criteria that will be evaluated primarily in the Community Outputs and Outcomes section of the application:
 - Clear, meaningful roles for AmeriCorps members in recruiting and supporting volunteers.
 - Extent to which AmeriCorps are trained to carry out their roles.
 - A well-developed plan and systems to recruit, screen, match, supervise and recognize community volunteers.
 - Extent to which the activities of community volunteers contribute to the direct service objectives of the program.

2006-07 AMERICORPS GRANTMAKING

Priorities and Initiatives: Purpose and Development

Background

In every grant cycle, the California Service Corps Commission sets state funding priorities that are used in selecting applications to receive AmeriCorps funding.

Priorities are statements of the commission interest in:

- specific needs to be met, for example, emergency preparedness or illiteracy, and/or
- specific target groups to receive service, for example, students in grades K-6 participating in afterschool programs, and/or
- specific groups to engage in service opportunities, for example older volunteers or lower division college and university students with an interest in the teaching profession, and/or
- specific organizations to receive AmeriCorps resources, for example small community organizations or high priority schools.

In the past, applications have received between one and five points depending upon the degree to which their application meets the commission's priorities. In the past, applications meeting multiple priorities could receive up to ten points. Though priority points can raise an application's score into the fundable range, all applications are scored primarily on overall program quality which accounts for up to 100 points.

In addition to state priorities, applicants will also be informed of federal priorities. Federal priorities were discussed at the August 30, 2005 Program Committee meeting.

When the opportunity arises, the commission also identifies initiatives. Initiatives are partnerships involving the commission and other funders. In past funding cycles, the commission has combined our resources with those of the California Department of Education, Chancellor's Office of the California Community Colleges, Office of Child Abuse Prevention, county and state children and families commissions, California Department of Health Services, and others to fund initiatives aimed at illiteracy, teacher shortage, child abuse and neglect, school readiness, health care access, and other needs.

On September 13, 2005, the Program Committee will meet to approve funding priorities and initiatives for the 2006-07 AmeriCorps grant cycle.

Priority and Initiative Development Process

- In May 2005, staff began the process of identifying potential priorities and developing staff recommendations for the Program Committee.
- During the initial phase, staff brainstormed and developed a wide-ranging list of potential priorities. Over the course of the summer, staff researched and analyzed potential priorities in order to assess their feasibility as state funding priorities. As part of its research, staff contacted a range of organizations.

- In the final stage of developing staff recommendations, staff members evaluated potential priorities using several criteria, including: existence of a compelling community need, federal and state priorities, whether the priority would be conducive to an innovative use of AmeriCorps resources, and very importantly, the presence of an established network positioned to make use of the priority, apply for, and implement, an AmeriCorps grant.
- The commission has carried over a number of funding priorities from one grant cycle to another based on the belief that, in order to have an impact on a particular need or issue area, grantees will require time to test models, refine strategies and reflect on lessons learned. Thus, the commission has sustained its commitment to many issues that it has identified as funding priorities.
- In addition to its work developing priorities, staff also engaged other funders in discussions about potential service initiatives. However, no new initiatives were developed for consideration of the Program Committee.

Grantmaking Policy #B11 – Capacity Building Pilot
Prepared by – William Ing

Overview of Issue

Traditionally, the AmeriCorps program has focused its efforts on direct service through which activities place members in direct contact with recipients of service (e.g., mentoring, tutoring, health education, home visiting, etc.). In recent years, the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) has broadened AmeriCorps' scope to include a mix of direct service and capacity building activities such as fundraising, volunteer management, etc. This focus on capacity building can be linked to CNCS' growing emphasis on community volunteerism and AmeriCorps program sustainability. In 2002, CNCS declared that recruiting, supporting and managing volunteers is a fundamental purpose of AmeriCorps. CNCS required that all programs include a volunteer component and permitted members to play a role in all aspects of volunteer generation and support. Since then, CNCS has gradually expanded this capacity building role to include other activities. The recently published AmeriCorps rule codified these changes and articulated that allowable capacity building activities include volunteer management, fundraising, automating an organization's systems, etc. The rule also laid out steps and requirements that would increase AmeriCorps program sustainability (defined by CNCS as a decreasing reliance on federal funds over time).

Although CSC is generally supportive of any effort to strengthen the service and volunteer field, it believes that focusing on the volunteer management aspect of capacity building would align with CSC's ongoing capacity building efforts, be consistent with CSC's core mission and would be effective in building community organizations' capacity to provide additional and/or more efficient services.

Properly trained and supervised, volunteers can perform meaningful activities such as advocating for abused children in the court system, mentoring at-risk youth, performing environmental restoration work in state and national parks, serving as board members for nonprofit organizations and assisting professional first responders and emergency personnel in disaster situations. Contrary to popular belief, effective utilization of volunteers does require financial and other resources. Organizations must ensure that volunteers are properly recruited, screened, matched with opportunities, trained, supervised and recognized. Improperly managed volunteers can be a liability to an organization, or even a threat to those being served by the sponsoring organization (poorly screened, untrained or unsupervised volunteers working with young children, for example).

In 2004, the Urban Institute conducted a volunteer management capacity study that examined community organizations' use of volunteers. The report provides the first formal assessment of community organizations' willingness to use, and readiness for, volunteers. Among the study's key findings is the assertion that most community organizations are able to use 20 new volunteers without any additional capacity enhancements (e.g., funding, volunteer managers, etc.). The report also found that less than half of organizations employ suggested best practices for managing volunteers.

The Urban Institute report, other related studies (e.g., studies on Baby Boomers and their potential volunteer contributions) and anecdotal evidence from the field strongly suggest that many community organizations need and desire both volunteers and additional resources to effectively support them.

Federal Policy Efforts

CNCS currently requires all programs to have a volunteer component and permits members to play a role in all aspects of volunteer generation and support.

In July 2005, CNCS released a draft strategic plan outlining its major goals through 2010. This plan outlines four cross-program priorities, including the greater engagement of volunteers in communities throughout the country. CNCS plans to build “the supply line for America’s armies of compassion” by using its resources to generate and support volunteers while building the capacity of community organizations (faith-based and secular) to effectively manage volunteers. CNCS’ stated goals encompass both national and internal Corporation targets for 2010, such as half of all nonprofit organizations and faith- and community-based organizations regularly utilizing effective volunteer recruitment and management practices (measured by the use of at least two of three effective volunteer management practices), and four million community volunteers annually recruited and managed within Corporation-funded programs.

CSC Involvement

CSC has a longstanding history of supporting California’s service and volunteerism sector with CNCS and outside resources. It has identified volunteer recruitment and support³ as a funding priority in its 2002 AmeriCorps Planning Grants Request for Proposals (RFP), 2003 AmeriCorps RFP and 2004 AmeriCorps RFP. In its 2003 and 2004 AmeriCorps RFPs, CSC also created a capacity building pilot intended to support programs focusing entirely on building the capacity of local organizations to effectively engage non-AmeriCorps volunteers in service.

Capacity Building Pilot Design

CSC has an interest in (1) building the capacity of the state’s community organizations (faith-based and secular) to manage and support volunteers, and (2) aligning its grantmaking activities with CNCS priorities in order to maximize the amount of national competitive funding flowing into the state. A special capacity building pilot would give CSC the opportunity to support AmeriCorps programs that can address both goals.

³ CNCS has previously used the term “volunteer generation” to refer to volunteer recruitment, screening, matching, training, supervision, recognition, etc. To ensure consistency in grantmaking, CSC adopted this term as well. CNCS has recently adopted the phrase “volunteer recruitment and support.” For purposes of consistency, this summary will use volunteer recruitment and support to refer to the full range of volunteer management activities.

Under CSC's capacity building pilot, applicants could propose programs focused exclusively on strengthening the ability of community organizations to effectively use volunteers to advance their work in local communities. All capacity building pilot programs would consist of two required elements: a volunteer recruitment component and a volunteer support component. Applicants would be able to partner with, and support, a variety of community organizations. For example, a program's AmeriCorps members could recruit volunteers and place them in a variety of youth-serving nonprofit organizations. It could also place members as volunteer managers at individual schools to supervise volunteer tutors throughout a school district.

The pilot's volunteer generation component would focus on recruiting community volunteers for organizations that had high-quality opportunities and sound systems for screening, matching, training, supervising and recognizing volunteers. It would be permissible for the program's volunteer recruiters to refer potential volunteers to organizations at which other members are serving as volunteer managers.

Through the pilot's volunteer support component, applicants would assign their members to service activities that build the long-term capacity of community organizations (faith-based and secular) to provide enhanced or additional service through volunteers. This includes efforts to expand the pool of organizations that adopt volunteerism as a strategy to meet community needs. For example, members could conduct education and outreach activities to community organizations, and follow up by assisting them with designing high-quality opportunities and establishing their volunteer programs. Member service activities would revolve around institutionalizing best practices and principles of effective volunteer management. Members might serve as a community organization's volunteer manager, create manuals, create or modify systems (volunteer recruitment plans, volunteer manual, screening procedures, training plans, etc.), etc.

CSC could use the capacity building pilot as a flexible tool to address multiple federal and state funding priorities. For example, the pilot selection process could give priority points to those applicants that proposed to focus on building capacity for service-learning programs, mentoring programs, programs that recruited Baby Boomers as volunteers and/or programs that will assist small community organizations.

Potential Applicants

Organizations that would be particularly suitable applicants for an AmeriCorps Capacity Building Pilot are those that regularly act as clearinghouses to recruit, match and/or manage volunteers on behalf of local community organizations. For example a Volunteer Center might field requests from nonprofit organizations seeking volunteer assistance (nonprofit organizations with neighborhood cleanup projects, schools with tutoring programs, etc.), recruit volunteers from the community at large and match these volunteers to appropriate projects. Specific organizations that might apply through the pilot include local Volunteer Centers, Volunteer Centers of California, Hands On Network (formerly the City Cares Network) affiliates, local United Way chapters,

mentoring programs or associations, Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) sponsors and school district or county office of education service-learning offices.

Priority – Childhood Obesity
Prepared by – John Govea

Overview of Issue

The percentage of overweight school-age children (ages 6-11) has more than doubled between 1970 and 2000 (6.5% to 15.3%). The percentage of overweight adolescents (ages 12-19) has tripled during the same period (5.0% to 15.5%). In an August 2005 study, the California Center for Public Health Advocacy linked the increasing prevalence of overweight to a variety of factors including increased overall calorie intake, increased consumption of soft drinks and high-fat, high-calorie, ready-to-eat foods, low levels of physical activity (aggravated by safety concerns in low-income communities) and limited access in low-income neighborhoods to healthy foods.

There are several significant long-term health risks that have been linked to childhood obesity. These include Type 2 Diabetes, high blood pressure, sleep apnea, mental health issues and adult obesity. Costs for health care attributable to excess body weight account for up to 7% of annual U.S. health care expenditures among adults (\$90 billion per year). In California the cost of medical care, workers' compensation and lost productivity attributable to overweight, obesity and physical inactivity among adults will be an estimated \$28 billion in 2005.

As with adult-onset obesity, childhood obesity has multiple causes centering on an imbalance between energy in (calories obtained from food) and energy out (calories expended by metabolic rate and physical activity.) Therefore, treatment of childhood obesity centers on physical activity, diet management and behavior modification.

An April 2005 brief by the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research reports that nearly one million California adolescents either get no physical activity or get less than recommended levels. In 2003, only 70.6% of adolescents reported participating in recommended levels of regular physical activity. The percentages are lower for girls (66.5%), Latinos (68.1%) Asians (62.3%) and African American teens (62.7%).

Federal Policy Efforts

The US Department of Health and Human Services has announced the Surgeon General's call to action to prevent and decrease overweight and obesity in children and adolescents.

State Policy Efforts

The California Department of Health Services has developed the California Obesity Prevention Initiative (COPI). The goals of COPI include intervening with children who are at high risk, addressing the disparities in obesity prevalence and treatment for underserved and vulnerable populations and creating environments that support healthy eating and physical activity for all.

Governor Schwarzenegger has announced the Governor's Summit on Health, Nutrition and Obesity to Shape Up California that will take place on September 15, 2005, bringing together experts and leaders from business, transportation, education, government and public health.

CSC Involvement

CSC has a number of after-school and school-based programs that touch on the factors that contribute to obesity through activities such as physical activity and play, gardening, nutrition and general health education. The program most focused on this issue is FitKids. This program places members in underserved and underperforming elementary schools to lead recess, lunchtime, class time and after-school programming that engages students in physical activity through play. Members also incorporate nutritional instruction in their programming.

Potential Applicants

Sports4Kids, one of our present grantees, is considering a major expansion of its Fit Kids program that reintroduces and supports sports and physical education into public schools. It expects to expand within California to Sacramento, San Jose and Long Beach.

Organizations addressing this issue include YMCA; Sports, Play & Active Recreation for Kids! (SPARK) and the California Endowment. YMCA is active in providing physical education in the schools. SPARK is a non-profit organization that provides training and workshops to engage youth of different developmental stages (early childhood, elementary, middle and high school) in physical education. It works primarily with schools and youth serving organizations that would be our potential applicants. SPARK assists these schools and organizations with obtaining funds to conduct these activities. The California Endowment has also selected 6 communities to participate in a \$26 million campaign that teams community-based organizations, school districts and public health departments to change local fitness and eating habits. Those communities are each presently in a planning process which could result in utilizing AmeriCorps members as a strategy for providing services.

Potential Service Activities

Health educators could provide instruction on nutrition and diet in schools, and with community based partners. Fitness facilitators might work with neighborhoods on development of safe spaces to engage in physical activity and help in the formation of exercise groups among children and their families. Through a FitKids type model, members would facilitate games and physical activity during recess and lunch breaks in elementary and middle schools and teach teachers to conduct and incorporate physical education in their lesson plan.

Criteria for Priority Points

In assessing programs that address multiple factors contributing to childhood obesity in underserved communities CSC will evaluate the degree to which the program:

- Serves low-income communities that have a well-documented prevalence of obesity among its children;
- Has an active partnership with schools and health agencies addressing the issue of obesity;
- Includes effective instruction on nutrition to children and to their parents;
- Increases the level of physical activity among obese children; and,
- Creates safe places for children and their families to engage in physical activity;

Priority – Emergency/Disaster Preparedness and Response
Prepared by – Eddie Aguero

Overview of the Issue

California's emergency preparedness and response needs are numerous, complex and far reaching. Federal and state agencies have taken an all-hazard approach to better preparing families and communities for emergencies, which could come in the form of a natural disaster, human caused emergency, or act of terrorism. The need to prepare for and utilize spontaneous volunteers during a disaster or emergency has become a focus for AmeriCorps and its partnering programs. As communities throughout California prepare by recruiting and training volunteers, AmeriCorps members are playing a key role within many disaster/emergency programs.

Federal Policy Efforts

- Department of Homeland Security (DHS) – The Department of Homeland Security, through its many emergency management agencies, coordinates with state and local officials and emergency management personnel to provide necessary assistance before, during and after major disasters and emergencies. Through its myriad of programs, volunteers are recruited, trained and utilize to provide support services to disaster/emergency responders from all public safety service organizations.

State Policy Efforts

- Governor's Office of Emergency Services – The Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES) coordinates overall state agency response to major disasters in support of local government. The office is responsible for assuring the state's readiness to respond to and recover from natural, manmade, and war-caused emergencies, and for assisting local governments in their emergency preparedness, response and recovery efforts. During major emergencies, OES calls upon state agencies to help provide support. Due to their capabilities and placement in local communities, California's major national service resources, AmeriCorps and Senior Corps (RSVP), are regularly called upon to assist in disaster/emergency preparedness and response activities.
- California Service Corps/Citizen Corps Program – CSC is the agency responsible for administering California's Citizen Corps Program (CCP). The CCP is actually composed of a growing number of programs, including Volunteers In Police Service, Neighborhood Watch Program, Community Emergency Response Team, Medical Reserve Corps, and Fire Corps – all coordinated by a Citizen Corps Council. Each of these programs offers unique volunteer opportunities to serve in local security efforts.

CSC Involvement

This area of member activity was a priority during the last application process. The focus was to fund preparedness and response training for AmeriCorps members. The training

took the form of the 20-hour Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training. CSC AmeriCorps programs have placed members with law enforcement and fire service agencies. For the 2004-05 AmeriCorps program year, the following AmeriCorps programs had performance measures involving preparedness and response activities: American Red Cross SAFE Corps, Fresno Safe and Proud Neighborhoods, Foundation for California Community Colleges (FCCC) ALERT and the Los Angeles Conservation Corps Recovery Team.

Potential Applicants

In addition to the traditional community outreach conducted by CSC, the following Citizen Corps programs are being encouraged to become AmeriCorps applicants:

- Volunteers In Police Service
- Neighborhood Watch Program
- Community Emergency Response Team
- Medical Reserve Corps
- Fire Corps

Potential Service Activities

- Members can recruit and coordinate volunteers to help in emergency response activities.
- Members can assist disaster relief and emergency management agencies in mass care (mass care and feeding), family services (disaster case work), community relations (information outreach), volunteer and donations management, and (supporting) local assistance centers.

Criteria for Priority Points

Programs that support the engagement of volunteers in preparing for and responding to all emergencies:

- Well-designed emergency preparedness and response activities are the primary focus of member service activities;
- Members receive CERT or other preparedness and response training; and,
- Partnership includes key government and non-government emergency response and disaster relief organizations.

Priority – Federal Work Study

Prepared by – Beth Stern

Overview of Issue

- In 2002-2003, CSU campuses devoted an average of 27 percent, more than \$5.2 million, of their Federal Work Study funding to community service placements, well above the national average of 14 percent and nearly quadruple the minimum requirement of 7 percent.
- CSU Sacramento devotes 67.3 percent of its Federal Work Study allocation to community service; much of that supports the tutoring program America Reads. Other CSU campuses with noteworthy community service allocations include CSU Fresno (55.8 percent), CSU Monterey Bay (52.4 percent), and CSU San Bernardino (41.3 percent).
- Federal law requires 7% of Federal Work Study funds received by a postsecondary institution be allocated to fund community service activities, thereby getting students out of the cafeteria and into the community.
- There are approximately 900 U.S. institutions of higher education that utilize service learning and civic engagement in curriculum.

Federal Policy Efforts

- *Campus Compact* - Campus Compact is a national coalition of more than 950 public and private college and university presidents – representing some 5 million students – who are committed to fulfilling the civic purposes of higher education.
- *Higher Education Reauthorization Act - Federal Work Study* – Federal law requires that institutions of higher education allocate 7% of their Federal Work Study funds to community placements of students.
- *Corporation for National and Community Service* – The CNCS Draft Strategic Plan for 2005-2010 outlines various strategies to attract more college students to take part in service opportunities and to develop a lifelong habit of volunteering. These strategies include the development and utilization of service learning courses, more extra-curricular opportunities to serve in the community, and encouraging institutions of higher education to provide more service opportunities through the Federal Work Study program. In fact, the Draft Strategic Plan sets a goal that by the year 2010, 20% (as opposed to the current 7%) of Federal Work Study funds will be devoted to college students who engage in service.

State Policy Efforts

- *California Campus Compact* – California Campus Compact is a membership organization of college and university presidents leading California institutions of higher education in building a statewide collaboration to promote service as a critical component of higher education.
- *1999 Governor's Initiative: A Call to Service for Universities, Colleges, and Community Colleges* – In April 1999, Governor Gray Davis called on California's

institutions of higher education to develop a community service requirement for graduation in order to strengthen an ethic of service among California's college students.

CSC Involvement

CSC has been involved with the effort to involve more college students in service through the utilization of Federal Work Study dollars since the launch of the America Reads Initiative in 1997. Currently, there are a handful of operating programs in the CSC portfolio that utilize FWS students in their program designs, such as: Jumpstart California, a program that involves college students working with low-income preschool children to build literacy and social skills; and, UCLA BruinCorps, a program in which UCLA undergraduate students tutor low performing children and youth in reading, writing, math and science at 20 program partner sites in the Los Angeles community. Although only a small amount of current programs in CSC's portfolio have received priority points for the utilization of FWS dollars, there is an interest in the field as evidenced by a panel discussion held at the 2005 Summer Training in San Francisco for current AmeriCorps programs. The panel consisted of representatives from CSU, community colleges, California Campus Compact and Jumpstart California, who discussed tips and lessons for programs curious about how to develop relationships with institutions of higher education, and interested in how to incorporate Federal Work Study students into their program designs.

Potential Applicants

- Colleges and universities.
- Programs with partnerships with institutions of higher education to utilize Federal College Work Study students in community-based service opportunities.

Potential Service Activities

AmeriCorps members utilizing Federal Work Study dollars can serve in a variety of program designs, including, but not limited to:

- Literacy-focused programs for school-aged children and adult community members who cannot read or are learning English as a second language;
- Capacity Building for community-based organizations, including economic and neighborhood revitalization programs;
- Mentoring youth, violence prevention and encouraging college attendance; and,
- Food Security: In an example of a program already running at Humboldt State, college students are educating local 3-5 graders about the biology and ecology of growing crops and the process of putting food on their table.

Criteria for Priority Points

- Higher education institutions involved in the proposed program increase their percentage of Federal Work Study funds devoted to community service placements.

- Partnerships include financial aid offices and/or other key college representatives.
- Formal agreements exist between financial aid offices and proposed program for Federal Work Study funding.
- Federal Work Study funds are detailed as match in the budget narrative of proposed program design.
- AmeriCorps member service activities are connected to the identified program need.
- Risk management, liability, and transportation issues have been considered.

Priority – Foster Youth
Prepared by – Denise Keller

Overview of Issue

Over half a million children are in the federal foster care system; in California approximately 90,000 young people live in out-of-home placements. Too often we hear horror stories of the system gone wrong, particularly for the youngest and most vulnerable children. Occasionally we hear of birth families who have turned their lives around or adoptions that give children permanent homes, but we rarely hear about the thousands of teenagers, up to 4,000 a year in California, who are wards of the state until they “age out” of the foster care system when they turn 18 or graduate from high school.

Most foster children heading toward emancipation have had little preparation for taking on the responsibilities of self-sufficiency. At best, they may have participated in the Independent Living Program at a local community college or a community-based organization, and they may have had a skills assessment or written a Transition Plan with a caseworker, but these are not enough to prepare young people to live successful, independent lives.

Statistics illustrate their difficulties: almost 60% of young adults accessing federally funded youth homeless shelters in 1997 were previously in foster care (Casey). In a San Francisco study, over 40% of former foster youth did not graduate from high school; 47% received some form of public assistance or had problems paying for food or housing; fewer than half were employed four years after leaving care; and 42% had become parents themselves (Barth, 1990).

Federal Policy Efforts

Significant federal dollars (Chaffee Act, 1999, etc.) are allocated to foster youth services, transitioning youth to independent living, and – to some degree – improving educational outcomes for foster youth. Some funding, although technically available, is not utilized at the state/county level due to high match percentages, difficulty of implementation, and other issues.

State Policy Efforts

Generally, state efforts are focused on transition services, independent living education, and some local office of education or school district programs. State programs include those operated by the Department of Social Services:

- California State Program Improvement Plan
- Governor’s Initiative on Homelessness CDSS/EDD/WIA Taskforce
- Independent Living Program
- Child Welfare Redesign Project
- STEP (Supportive Transitional Emancipation Program), etc.

CSC Involvement

Two related priorities established during the 2003-2004 grantmaking cycle included “services to foster youth” and “former foster youth as AmeriCorps members.” Several applications received priority points, and at least two of those programs were funded and currently focus their activities on foster youth. Some applicants indicated their capacity and plans for enrolling former foster youth as AmeriCorps members, although this effort has generally been more difficult than anticipated, even for those applicants who are uniquely able to support former foster youth in a successful term of service. To better meet the needs of greater numbers of transitioning foster youth, staff recommends a single priority focused on specific services to that group.

Potential Applicants

Community-based organizations working or able to work with transitioning foster youth; current youth-serving programs; offices of education; California and local conservation corps; etc.

Potential Service Activities

- Educational advocate and school liaison (class selection; extra-curricular activities; meeting high school graduation and college preparatory requirements; enrolling in specialized high school programs as appropriate (AVID, Upward Bound, ROP, etc.); identifying and meeting application deadlines for college, vocational training and service opportunities; pursuing financial aid; developing job skills; vocational mentoring).
- Tutoring (at school, after-school location, and/or home/group home) – direct and/or through volunteer matching.
- Training caseworkers/foster parents/group home staff to support academic achievement (maintaining school when youths’ placement changes, scheduling appointments outside school hours).
- Reform life-skills development approaches to be more hands-on. Provide youth who are leaving care with a variety of opportunities to learn independent living skills and provide tangible resources, such as cash, household items, and a driver’s license (Casey recommendation).

Criteria for Priority Points

- The partnership includes significant involvement of foster youth serving agencies;
- Comprehensive service activities focus on providing opportunities outside classroom learning for foster youth to employ skills needed for successful transition to independence;

- Service activities include increasing achievement of age-appropriate milestones (i.e., high school graduation, drivers' education and licensing, applying for and maintaining jobs, participating in internships, service activities, or vocational skills programs, etc.);
- Service activities assist foster youth in identifying and connecting with current and future services and opportunities; and,
- Program services are focused on transitioning foster youth ages 13-21.

Priority – High Priority Schools
Prepared by – Johannes Troost

Overview of Issue

- California ranked 45th of 50 states in 2003 in its efforts to improve student performance in English/language arts and mathematics.
- Of the variables related to low academic performance, those children living in poverty are most vulnerable to academic failure, poor health, crime, and other indicators of well being.
- Of California's approximately 9,222 schools, approximately 60% or 5,533 schools are eligible for federal Title 1 funding for students from low-income families.

Simply stated, a majority of California's children are not proficient in English/language arts and mathematics, and are increasingly ill-prepared for a highly competitive job market.

Federal Policy Efforts

The US Department of Education, through the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) monitors student performance by state through the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), a test administered in all states that assesses performance in English/language arts (ELA) and math. In 2003, California ranked 45th of 50 states.

Through the NCLB, Title 1 schools (schools that have large numbers of economically disadvantaged students) who do not succeed in meeting student improvement goals in English/language arts and math are placed in "Program Improvement," and receive additional resources and progressive sanctions if improvement goals are not met.

State Policy Efforts

The California Department of Education (CDE) has established an accountability plan that monitors student achievement and school performance through the Academic Performance Index (API). The API helps define adequate yearly progress toward meeting both state and federal academic improvement goals. The API is a number between 200 (the lowest possible score) and 1000 (the highest possible score) for the school that indicates its student body proficiency in ELA and math. Each year, all school API scores are divided into 10 deciles and assigned a rank of 1 to 10. CDE has a number of intervention programs based on API score and school rank. Two of these are: High Priority Schools (only those schools that receive a state rank of 1); and, School Improvement Title 1 schools, regardless of state rank or API, that fail to make progress toward their API improvement targets.

Schools ranked in the bottom 3 deciles are predominantly Title 1 schools, and include all state High Priority schools.

CSC Involvement

CSC has a history of supporting focused efforts to improve academic performance. In 1999, CSC developed a joint initiative with CDE for federal America Reads grants. In 2004, in an effort to focus resources on those schools with the greatest need, CSC established a priority for placing AmeriCorps members in poorly performing schools in high poverty neighborhoods. Member service activities focused on tutoring, mentoring or enrichment activities that had a direct impact on academic achievement.

Potential Applicants

Applicant organizations for this priority will include: Title 1 schools (public and charter schools) and community based organizations serving Title 1 schools.

Potential Service Activities

AmeriCorps members and volunteers typically serve as reading and math tutors, mentors, homework assistants, enrichment/activity specialists, and volunteer managers/coordinators.

Criteria for Priority Points

An applicant can receive points in this priority if:

- The preponderance of service sites in the applicant's proposal are schools in the bottom three API deciles;
- The preponderance of AmeriCorps member and volunteer placements are in schools in the bottom three deciles; and,
- The preponderance of member and volunteer service activities focus on academic improvement.

Initiative – School Readiness

Prepared by – Johannes Troost

Overview of Issue

- Early childhood experiences are the key to learning, success in school, and functioning in later life. Neuroscience has shown that brain growth is at its highest between the ages of 0-3, and that there are critically important periods for some sensory, motor, and language capabilities, as well as mental health and social functioning, all of which impact a child's ability to learn and succeed in school and with their career and life goals.
- The School Readiness Initiative focuses efforts on poor children, families, and neighborhoods where the need for information and resources is greatest.
- Over the past several decades, there have been enormous shifts in the social and economic conditions of families, with many more parents working out of the home for longer periods of time. California families need a variety of stable, high quality early care and education options available for their children to provide a foundation for school success.

Federal Policy Efforts

Federal policy has resulted in Head Start and more recent Early Start programs. These two federal programs are consistently under-funded.

This Initiative adopted the definition of school readiness developed by the National Education Goals Panel (NEGP) which covers three aspects of a child's life: children's readiness for school and schools' readiness for children, family and community supports, and services that contribute to children's readiness for school success.

State Policy Efforts

County First Five Commissions are among the leaders in the school readiness effort. These commissions receive funding from Proposition 10 passed by voters in 1998. Proposition 10 taxes tobacco products and generates about \$700 million a year in revenue that must be spent on health issues for children ages 0 to 5. County commissions receive eighty percent of this money, and the state commission receives twenty percent. It is these funds that support the School Readiness Initiative.

The School Readiness Initiative engages families, community members, health and social service professionals and educators in the important work of preparing children, birth to age five, for elementary school. The counties and state have adopted the NEGP definition as the framework for the five "Essential and Coordinated Elements" required of every SR program:

6. Early Care and Education (ECE): improved access to quality ECE through referrals, information and outreach to parents and providers, and improved implementation of effective practices through training of ECE providers.

7. Parenting and Family Support Services: to improve literacy and parenting skills, home visitation, employment development, and family court services.
8. Health and Social Services: such as health plan enrollment, provision and/or referral to basic health care including prenatal care, mental health counseling, services for children with disabilities and other special needs, nutrition, oral health, drug and alcohol counseling, child abuse prevention, and case management.
9. Schools' Readiness for Children/School Capacity: schools' outreach to parents; kindergarten transition programs; and cross-training, shared curriculum, and planning for early childcare educators/providers and early elementary teachers. A seamless provision of health, social services, after-school programs, and other supports for children and families are also included.
10. Program Infrastructure, Administration, and Evaluation: participant, site, district, and county coordination and staff training and development. Program evaluation aimed at continuous program improvement, fiscal accountability, and collaborative governance (with families and community members) is also included.

The First Five Service Corps Program includes parts of these five "Essential and Coordinated Elements." Services are culturally and linguistically appropriate and sensitive to the needs of diverse populations, including children with disabilities and other special needs.

CSC Involvement

CSC initiated the funding partnership with county and state Children and Family Commissions in 2002. CSC also helped develop a VISTA program as part of this initiative. CSC provided \$1 million a year in funding for the last three years, which was matched by \$2 million a year in county Children and Family Commission funds. Local commissions fund community based organizations with a blend of Proposition 10 and CSC dollars for the school readiness initiative. This includes organizations like Boys and Girls Clubs, child care centers, community based family resource centers, and local health and dental clinics serving high poverty areas in urban, suburban and rural communities.

Service Activities

Member service activities include among other things: distributing "Parent Kits" to new mothers; home and hospital visiting; helping parents learn to read and play with their children; enrolling children in healthy families and other no or low cost health and dental insurance programs; connecting parents to alcohol and drug, employment and other social services.

Initiative Implementation

Staff recommend a second three year commitment to this initiative. County Children and Family Commissions have agreed to continue and potentially expand their matching funds to this initiative. Participating counties currently include: Del Norte, Humboldt,

Kern, Lake, Lassen, Madera, Mendocino, Orange, Riverside, San Diego, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Solano, Ventura and Yolo.

Priority – Small Community Organizations (Faith-Based and Secular)
Prepared by – William Ing

Overview of Issue

Unlike other potential priorities and initiatives, the small community organization issue does not reflect an actual community need, but rather a trend in federal funding and policy. President Bush has articulated an interest in seeing more programs operated and managed by faith-based and community-based organizations (FBOs and CBOs). The White House has communicated this interest to federal agencies through executive orders and other guidance. Results include the creation of funding directed at FBOs and CBOs (e.g., the Department of Health and Human Services' Compassion Capital Fund) and emphasis on a level playing field in which there are fewer regulatory and bureaucratic barriers to FBOs and CBOs competing for funding. There is evidence that the White House measures success in this area by tracking federal grants awarded to FBOs. A recent White House fact sheet reports that from federal fiscal year (FY) 2003 to FY 2004, the number of grants awarded to FBOs by five major federal agencies increased by 20 percent, while the amount of grant funding awarded to FBOs increased by 14 percent.⁴

Aligning the California Service Corps' (CSC) 2006 AmeriCorps grantmaking with the federal government's emphasis on FBOs and CBOs presents CSC with an opportunity to bring additional funds into California while building capacity in the state's service and volunteerism field. Since the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) has demonstrated that it has a strong interest in supporting the President's Faith-Based and Community Initiative, addressing this issue strengthens California's applicants in competing for national funds.

Federal Policy Efforts

The White House and other federal agencies are working to increase the involvement of FBOs and CBOs in delivery of government-sponsored services. The White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives serves as a coordinating entity. It provides resources, hosts conferences and refers interested FBOs/CBOs to state and local faith-based and community liaisons, as well as federal Centers for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. Located in eleven federal departments and agencies (including CNCS), Centers provide FBOs and CBOs with resources and link them to host agency funding opportunities. State and local faith-based liaisons play a similar role, acting as a single point of contact in their jurisdictions, disseminating information about federal funding opportunities, supporting capacity-building efforts, etc.

Through Executive Order 13331 (issued February 2004), President Bush has explicitly charged CNCS with supporting his Faith-Based and Community Initiative. CNCS has responded with several efforts, including establishment of FBO/CBO support as a funding priority.

⁴ The *Compassion in Action: Producing Real Results for Americans Most in Need* fact sheet (www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/03/20050301-1.html) refers specifically to FBOs, not FBOs and CBOs.

State Policy Efforts

The California Employment Development Department (EDD) has funded FBOs and CBOs through its California Community and Faith-Based Initiative. This initiative supported 40 programs (\$7.24 million) in state FY 2002 and 20 programs (\$4.97 million) in FY 2001. Although EDD is not currently funding this initiative, it now includes language in its RFPs indicating that FBOs and CBOs are eligible grant applicants. Under the previous administration, the state's FBO/CBO liaison was housed at the California Health and Human Services Agency. At present, the liaison position is vacant.

CSC Involvement

This priority is an outgrowth of CSC's ongoing efforts to make its resources accessible to a range of community organizations. CSC has focused on these organizations through outreach (directly and through intermediaries) and grantmaking. In 2000, CSC and the California Council of Churches developed an outreach database of 354 FBOs and service providers. In its 2002 AmeriCorps planning grant process, CSC created a funding priority for applicants that included FBOs and CBOs in their programs. CSC carried the FBO/CBO funding priority into its 2003 and 2004 AmeriCorps operating grant RFPs. Prior to any major grantmaking cycle, CSC typically publicizes technical assistance sessions and the RFP through its outreach database and intermediaries such as Professor John Orr (USC Center for Religion and Civic Culture), the San Francisco Foundation's FAITHS Initiative, EDD and the California Council of Churches.

Potential Applicants

The small community organization priority would focus on a subset of FBOs and CBOs: small community organizations (faith-based and secular) with relatively few resources. High-capacity applicants that partner with small FBOs and CBOs would bring resources to organizations that cannot directly access federal grants, and build the California service and volunteerism field's capacity to deliver more services through the effective recruitment and support of volunteers.

Potential Service Activities

Since this priority refers to a type of *organization* rather than an *issue area* (e.g., education or the environment), members would be involved in the full range of AmeriCorps service activities. For example, FBOs in CSC's current portfolio engage their members in referring the homeless to appropriate services; tutoring and mentoring; and volunteer management.

Criteria for Priority Points

Through its RFP, CSC will prioritize those applicants that involve small FBOs and CBOs in their proposed AmeriCorps program by evaluating the extent to which:

- Small community organizations benefit from AmeriCorps resources;

- The partnership consists of small community organizations with little or no history of accessing national service resources;
- Small community organizations are active and valued members of the partnership;
- Member service activities effect change in small community organizations that will be in place after members leave (members might establish a volunteer program and its associated systems, expand an organization's pool of potential board members, etc.); and,
- Partners demonstrate an understanding of church-state issues (if applicable).